

Idaho Council on Children's Mental Health



**Report to the Governor
November 2005**

Introduction

More than 17,000 Idaho children are affected by serious emotional disturbances (SED). These children often find themselves involved in multiple systems, such as juvenile probation and mental health services.

In a system of care, agencies and community organizations work together as one system, focusing on child and family strengths. Services and supports in a system of care range from mental health services to recreational programs and are supported by guiding principles. The state of Idaho continues to build an infrastructure for our system of care so that children can thrive in their own communities.

The Idaho Council on Children's Mental Health is pleased to provide the 2005 Report to the Governor. The Report provides the status and accomplishments of the Idaho System of Care, Jeff D Court plan as well as recommendations for continued success.

What is SED?

A serious emotional disturbance includes a range of behavioral and emotional disorders severe enough to limit or interfere with a child's ability to function in the family, school, or community.



The Idaho Council on Children's Mental Health (ICCMH)

The ICCMH encourages members to work toward System of Care goals in several ways. Formal agreements among child serving agencies are designed to meet standards of cultural competence, family involvement, and evidence based practice. In addition, the Idaho Council on Children's Mental Health endeavors to monitor the outcomes of children with SED and their families. Lastly, the ICCMH is beginning to review expenditures to assure that funding is used appropriately.

Regional Councils

There are seven regional councils located across the state and a tribal coordinating council. Each regional council serves a geographic area corresponding to one of the seven Department of Health and Welfare service delivery areas. Regional council membership varies based on the number of local councils in the geographic area and number of community partners willing to participate in the system of care. Typically, regional council members represent the local councils, parents, child serving agencies, and other community partners such as businesses, faith-based organizations, and the judiciary.

Regional councils provide a critical link between community-based local councils and the ICCMH through their regional chairpersons. Chairpersons identify community successes, challenges and create possible solutions at monthly meetings. These solutions become recommendations for the ICCMH. Regional councils also communicate statewide policies and plans from the ICCMH to the local councils.

The tribal coordinating council represents the six tribes: The Kootenai Tribe of Idaho, The Coeur d'Alene Tribe, The Nez Perce Tribe, The Shoshone-Paiute Tribe, The Shoshone-Bannock Tribe, and the Northwestern Band of The Shoshone Nation. The purpose of the Council is to improve service availability, coordination, and delivery to children with serious emotional disturbances and their families within the system of care.

Local Councils

Local councils are a focal point in the communities for identifying community resources, outreach and service planning. The local councils work with Wraparound Specialists who provide a coordinated, comprehensive case plan for children with serious emotional disturbance and their families. There are more than 30 councils statewide.

Summary of the Past Year

The Idaho Council for Children's Mental Health adopted the Business Practice Model in 2005. The Business Practice Model was created by children's mental health council members who wanted to have a standardized way of helping families across the state. In order to implement the model, the Idaho system of care adopted the Wraparound approach.

"Wraparound" is a practical way to capitalize on community resources and support for children with SED and their families. Resources and support may include piano lessons, special help for an emotionally disturbed child, or transportation to work for a parent. Families meet with professionals in order to determine their needs, with a Wraparound Specialist to facilitate the process. This practice is effective in many other systems of care throughout the country.

The Idaho Council on Children's Mental Health supports the wraparound process. The Department of Health and Welfare provides eight Wraparound Specialists throughout the state and updates the ICCMH at the monthly meetings regarding the status of the families served in the wraparound process.

Annual Statewide Conference

More than 400 community members attended the annual statewide System of Care conference, May 1-3, 2005. Emphasis was placed on increased youth, family participation and cultural competency. Conference topics included strengths-based assessments, healthy families, attention deficit disorder, and tribal partners in the system of care. Evaluation results from the conference were excellent. Ninety-seven percent of those completing an evaluation indicated they would return for the conference next year.

Examples of Council Success

Region 7- The Regional Children's Mental Health Council, Americorp, and the Madison School district provided a summer camp for children. The goal of the camp was to decrease stigma among children, and provide a positive summer activity. Over a period of six days, 23 children affected by SED and their friends enjoyed the zoo, picnics, expressive art, water fun and much more. Children practiced their anger management skills and learned more about others. The event coordinators look forward to doing it again next year.

Region 1- The regional council is partnering with the Idaho State Police and the FBI to help children. Reports of predators on the web led the regional

council to provide information on mental health and internet security for schools. The council is partnering with the local police department to provide internet safety manuals for every school open house in one county.

Region 2-The regional council is hosting Michael Clark, national expert on strengths-based practice in October. The training provides insight on strengths-based assessments for professionals, parents, and community members. The juvenile justice department assisted in providing funding for the event.

Tribal Coordinating Council - The council collaborated with the Nez Perce Children's Home to provide mental health screening upon admission. The Children's Home offers protective custody to children who are removed from their home.

Federal Site Report

The Idaho System of Care receives funds through the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration. This funding source requires site visits during the six year cooperative agreement period. The first visit was May 2004. The federal project officer and team determined that a return visit was needed in 2005. Key findings from the May 2005 visit are listed below.

Strengths of the Idaho System of Care:

- Adoption of the Wraparound curriculum
- Local and regional council planning has taken place
- Technical Assistance and social marketing plans lend to sustainability
- The Federation of Families is working with the National Alliance for the Mentally Ill
- Families are involved in Wraparound training

Areas to work on:

- Proceed with statewide strategic and sustainability plans
- Ensure that Family Support Specialists are involved with family enrollment into the system of care
- Evaluate family involvement in all levels of the system of care
- Statewide implementation of system of care to serve the anticipated number of families

The system of care is working on the recommendations. For example, a national facilitator will lead our system of care in strategic planning. The next site visit will occur during 2006.

Agency Collaboration

As the ICCMH encourages collaboration, members are finding ways to serve children. A few examples are listed below.

Federation of Families for Children's Mental Health

Trainings are offered to families and professionals on a regular basis across the entire state. Parenting Survival Skills, Sib Shops, and "Art from the Heart" are a few of the offered classes. Art from the heart classes allow youth to express their feeling through poetry, art work, and short stories. More than 130 young people have participated in the classes.

Parents are participating on local System of Care boards, committees, and trainings. These include the Diversity Team, Juvenile Justice/Children's Mental Health Collaboration Work Group, and Wraparound orientation.

Treatment Foster Care Work Group (TFC)

The Department of Health and Welfare convened an interagency workgroup to explore the possibility of developing a statewide TFC system for children in DHW and DJC custody. Participants in this work group include Medicaid, Family and Community Services and Clinical DHW staff as well as Fiscal, and Community Services DJC staff. An important objective for this group is to identify on-going funding for TFC, specifically Medicaid, in the attempt to leverage state general funds match to federal funds. TFC is an evidenced based practice for juveniles with conduct disorders and is being used in other service delivery systems to partially displace the use of existing group care.

Juvenile Justice/Children's Mental Health Collaboration Work Group

DJC is participating on the Juvenile Justice/Children's Mental Health Collaboration Work Group. The Department of Health and Welfare retained a contracted facilitator for the group, which is expected to remain active for 12 months. Other participants in the group include parents, County Detention and Probation, Family Advocates, DHW staff, as well as clinical staff from State Hospital South. Public Education and others are also represented at these meetings. The purpose of the group is to collaborate and cooperate in planning and developing comprehensive services for children with serious emotional disturbance at risk of or involved in the juvenile justice system. Members of the group provide updates to the ICCMH on a monthly basis.

Status on Jeff D. Court Plan

Judge Winmill held a Jeff D. status conference in July 2004. At that conference, The State of Idaho (Defendants) requested a compliance hearing to give them an opportunity to prove compliance with court orders and plans. Jeff D. attorneys (Plaintiffs) asked for an expert witness/Special Master to

determine compliance due to the complexity of the case, at the expense of the Defendants. The Defendants objected to this idea.

In August 2004, Judge Winmill issued an order to show cause for an independent expert witness. The Court believed that an expert witness was needed to determine compliance due to the complexity of the issues. Defendants argued that the issues were not complex and an expert witness was not necessary. However, the Court determined that an expert witness was needed, and required Plaintiffs and Defendants to submit a list of acceptable expert witnesses.

Defendants argued that action items needed to be limited before assignment to an expert witness in order to reduce the Defendant's expenses. Defendants and Plaintiffs were ordered to submit a joint statement of arguments on action items within the court plan and which ones were in compliance. Defendants and Plaintiffs agreed that 25 of the 250 action items were in compliance.

In July 2005, the U.S. District Court ordered a status conference. The order determined that a Special Master would not be appointed, and there was no mention of an expert witness. During the status conference, the Defendants and Plaintiffs decided that court plan information should be made available to the Plaintiffs in a mutually agreed upon format. Plaintiffs are to examine the information in November 2005, and a status conference will be held in December. A confidentiality agreement was entered to protect the privacy of the Defendant's clients.

A report of undisputed facts will be filed January 2006, and oral arguments will be held February 2006. It is anticipated that the Defendants and Plaintiffs will be preparing for a summer compliance hearing. The U.S. District court has made it clear that the Jeff D. case will be completely resolved and dismissed in the next year, without further opportunities for the State to come into compliance.

Recommendations

1. The ICCMH recommends support for the Department of Health and Welfare's funding request for evidence-based practices for youth with mental illness involved in the Juvenile Justice system. This population continues to increase in number and severity. The funding would be coordinated with Regional Mental Health Advisory Board activities to meet the needs of this population with services that have demonstrated evidence of results.
2. The ICCMH recommends support for the Department of Health and Welfare's request for additional Wraparound Specialists. These positions are critical for local councils to meet the needs of SED children and their families so they can remain in their communities.

3. Support the Department of Health and Welfare's efforts to determine a method of Medicaid reimbursement for therapeutic foster care.
4. Continue to encourage adoption and implementation of the wrap around system on a statewide level to assure at risk children with SED and their families have access to services.
5. Ensure parent involvement and support in system of care processes at all levels including training in wraparound services and reimbursement in a timely manner.
6. Ensure quality of services provided by private providers across the state through training incentives to participate in our system of care, wrap around services, and evidence based practices.
7. Encourage relationships with Medicaid to make the system more user friendly for providers and families.
8. The ICCMH recommends that agency funding silos are eliminated to allow flexibility in blending funds to better serve children and youth whose needs cross child serving systems.
9. Continue to improve the tracking of state budgets so we determine how much our system of care is costing and whether it is producing the desired outcome.
10. Ensure better system collaboration.

The Idaho System of Care continues to work together on behalf of Idaho families and children, as we build on each other's strengths.

For more information on the system of care, visit www.idahosystemofcare.org, or contact

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